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The Captain & Ms. Marvel
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The Marvel-ous Brian Reed

Which Brian writes more ***Marvel*** series than any other?

Nope, it's not that Bendis fellow—it's *Brian Reed,* the author of Marvel's two "Marvel" heroes—***Captain Marvel*** and ***Ms. Marvel.*** And he's the same Brian who has managed to revitalize two second-string characters and move them into the forefront of the ***Secret Invasion.***

Between the dozens of Skrulls who have shown up in ***Captain Marvel*** (including -- readers have been led to believe -- the good Captain himself), to the attempts by Skrulls to replace Ms. Marvel, *Brian Reed's* titles have become must-reads for fans who want to know what's happening on the front line of ***Secret Invasion.*** (And speaking of ***Front Line...*** well, we'll get to that later on)

The lead-in to ***Secret Invasion*** has brought changes to ***Ms. Marvel,*** Reed's first ongoing Marvel series—but Reed points out that some of the changes in the series have come about as Reed has gained comics experience. "I have totally grown," Reed told *Vaneta Rogers.* "I went back to the first three issues when I was writing this story arc with the Brood and Cru and resolving all that, because it was supposed to be resolved in, like, issue #9. But ***Civil War*** happened and some other stories happened, and I finally decided I just had to end this. So I went back and I re-read the first three issues so I was fresh and remembered what I had set up. And I was in pain. I couldn't stand it. I was like, 'Oh my God! This is bad! What have I done?'

Whether or not readers agree with Reed's overly harsh assessment of that early work, there's no doubt that he has managed to bring dramatic changes to the character of Ms. Marvel during the series. "She started off very naive and focused on her wanting to be a big superhero," Reed said. "When I told my mom that I was writing Ms. Marvel, she was like, 'Who's that?' And I thought, *that's the first six months of the title right there.* Ms. Marvel: Who's that?

"And that was a lot of the early stuff. She wanted to be a superhero again. And she went about it completely the wrong way, wanting to be famous instead of being good. She hired a publicist and everything. And it was about issue #11 or #13 where she realized that was backwards. She realized that was wrong. And that was the first little bit of her growth as a character.

"And now, in the ***Secret Invasion*** tie-in, I wrote a bit of dialogue for her, and she says, 'This is what I've always needed, but I didn't know it until just now.' And it was one of those things I wrote that I didn't know she was going to say it until I typed it. It's that moment where she changes yet again and we move into the third act with her now. I started her as really insecure but trying to be the hero, then I went to her being the hero, and now, to where she's figured it out and she's going to do it full steam ahead."

How closely linked will ***Ms. Marvel*** be to the whole ***Secret Invasion*** storyline? "***Ms. Marvel #s 25, #26,*** and ***#27*** are the set up, and then #28, #29 and #30 are in the heart of the invasion. And Ms. Marvel is one of the only heroes in New York at the time of the invasion, so it's going to be pretty much her against an army when that starts. So that's something for people to look forward to."

And of course, Reed's other "Marvel" series, ***Captain Marvel,*** is also integrally tied to ***Secret Invasion.*** As Reed reminds us, one of the Skrulls even told the back-from-the-dead hero that 'You're not Captain Marvel at all. That's what issues #4 and #5 are about. Is that guy lying? Is that Skrull screwing with him—and why, if he is?" And you can be sure that Captain Marvel will play a vital role in the big event.

In addition to the mystery regarding Captain Marvel's true identity, Reed has introduced a parallel mystery—and it involved the painting "Alexander Entering Babylon." What's the significance of Captain Marvel's fascination with this painting, and what led Reed to develop this as an important plot point? "That was one of those things where I needed him to be doing something in France. The pitch said, 'Captain Marvel is in France.' And then it said Tony Stark goes and gets him out of France and the rest of the story plays out. And I didn't have why he was there. I didn't have what he was doing. I just was like, 'Fine, I'll put him at the Louvre.' I'm not going to be a hack and have him looking at the Mona Lisa. I need a painting for him to look at.

"I went to the Louvre website and looked at what they had in their collection, and it literally was like, the first thing I clicked on was this. And I read a description of what it was, and I went, 'Oh my God!' And I did this quick thing to make sure I remembered my high school history classes and Alexander the Great. And I went, 'This is perfect!' It meshed with the whole story I had already written. And it made it all work better than it had.

"We now have this mystery of 'Why is he looking at this painting?' I understood instantly why he was looking at it and why it was important. It gave me three issues worth of story where I could reveal pieces off the puzzle. And it's been great how much readers have latched onto that."

"Captain Marvel even talks about it a little bit in the first issue—about why he's looking at it and why it's important to him. But there's a little more to it than that, that even he doesn't realize yet. He knows there's something going on with it, but he hasn't put all the pieces together."

The mini-series also has a group of people worshipping Captain Marvel. How did that story element come about? "I've always wanted to play with that idea of superheroes and religion, because I honestly think if we had people flying, we wouldn't be just pointing and going, 'Hey, look! It's Captain Marvel!" We would be like, "Holy God!' There would be people who would fall to their knees and start worshipping. There would also be people who would scream and kill themselves because they think it's the end times. You would see all these religious reactions, and I wanted to play with that. And I thought, when better than when a guy has just come back from the dead? It gives you that one more beat, like Christ rising or whatever. It's a story that you see in religion, so I thought it was perfect and I could play with this.

"And it was another case where I wanted to have this cult that worships him, and the more I got into writing them, the more story I found to do with them. And it turned out being a lot of fun.

"It all comes together in the fifth issue. It was really surprising to me when we went back and did the lettering, because I kind of wrote all the scripts -- bang bang bang. When we were doing the lettering, I realized I was revealing things in issue #3, and I thought, 'Wow, I didn't realize I was giving that away that early.' But people haven't quite picked up on that yet."

In the aftermath of Captain Marvel's present-day return during the ***Civil War*** event, many readers expected Reed's ***Captain Marvel*** to focus on the hero's efforts to come to term with his own impending death from cancer; however, that storyline has been moved to the back burner in this miniseries? Did Reed intentionally stay away from that introspective rumination of superheroic mortality? I didn't want this to be five issues of Captain Emo," Reed said with a laugh. "That's part of why I wanted to have him go off to France initially. I wanted him to kind of have this moment to think, and what he says in the book is, 'I die flat on my back, and I'm a soldier. That's not how I want to die, but I know that's how I end up, so I've got to do something between now and then.' And that's when I thought, OK, *that's* the story to tell. That story of between now and then. It's supposed to be what's in the back of his mind and what's driving him, but not what the focus is."

Reed is also involved with the upcoming ***Secret Invasion: Who Do You Trust?*** oneshot; his eight-page contribution fills in the gap between ***Captain Marvel #5*** and ***Secret Invasion #1.*** "We had this story that happened off camera that none of us felt like needed to be told, because it just kind of made sense," Reed explained. "But then we were talking about what it would be, and we realized that we needed to show that. And so that's what we see there: how Captain Marvel makes this decision that he's not comfortable with. So he has to explain it to himself why he wants to do it."

Reed has also been tapped to write ***Secret Invasion: Front Line,*** a five-issue limited series. "With this series, I'm kind of taking the title literally. It's not just ***Front Line*** the newspaper—it's the front line of the invasion. It's Ben Urich from the ***Front Line*** comics and Daredevil -- a character I love and wanted to use in ***Captain Marvel,*** but the reporter story I was telling wasn't a Ben story -- so I got the chance to use him here."

As Reed sees it, "I always thought that one of the most interesting aspects of a place like the Marvel Universe was the response of the average person who has to cope with the amazing things that happen around him. This is a world filled with millions and millions of people who don't have any powers, who are just like all of us, but they exist in a world where these superhuman things happen, and they have to cope with it—but they never get used to it. No matter how much of this sort of action they see, they're still as awed by it as any of us would be if a superhero showed up in our world.

"***Front Line*** s a story about the regular people of the Marvel Universe. It's those people you always see in the background of the panels when the heroes are fighting. And it's really my wanting to make the heroes look as big and heroic and special as possible. So we see everything from the point of view of these regular people. When we see Spider-Man, it's an event. As readers, we're used to seeing these heroes. But to somebody in the Marvel Universe, it's still pretty special.

"The comparison I've been using is every night on the news, we hear about some explosive devise blowing up a truck in Iraq, and we feel bad about it, but it doesn't really mean anything to us because we haven't really *experienced* it. But if you're driving to work tomorrow and the car in front of you explodes, think about what your reaction to that is going to be. That's what it's going to feel like when you're driving to work and Dr. Octopus busts through that wall and Spider-Man comes out. That's what you'd be feeling. You've seen it on the news and it's not really real to you, but now it is. And that's what I want to show.

"When the Skrulls show up, it means something to these people. It's not just, 'Oh, the heroes will take care of it.' No -- this is the end of the world.

"All five issues focus on four different groups of people; I slowly bring them all together and cross the stories, and bring them apart again as the story goes on."

Ms. Marvel #25 and ***Captain Marvel #4*** are currently available. ***Captain Marvel #5*** is scheduled for April 16th release; ***Ms. Marvel #26*** follows on April 23rd. ***Secret Invasion: Who Do You Trust?*** and ***Secret Invasion: Front Line*** are scheduled to debut this summer.

by Vaneta Rogers
(with Cliff Biggers)

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Comic Shop Newsarama

Produced by Comic Shop News in cooperation with Matt Brady and newsarama.com

CSNsider

•How do you follow up a hit like the redesigned ***Batman: The Killing Joke*** hardcover? With a deluxe ***Camelot 3000*** hardcover collecting the long-out-of-print *Mike W. Barr-Brian Bolland* SF continuation of the Arthurian legend. The work will be entirely recolored to reflect today's more sophisticated production values. "It's a perfect followup sale to ***Batman: The Killing Joke***," DC Vice President - Sales *Bob Wayne* said.

•*Frank Miller's* ***Ronin*** is the next book slated for DC's ***Absolute*** treatment: look for it in September.

•Readers can look forward to a 2009 deluxe collected edition of the Golden Age Captain Marvel ***Monster Society of Evil*** story arc by *C.C. Beck* and others.

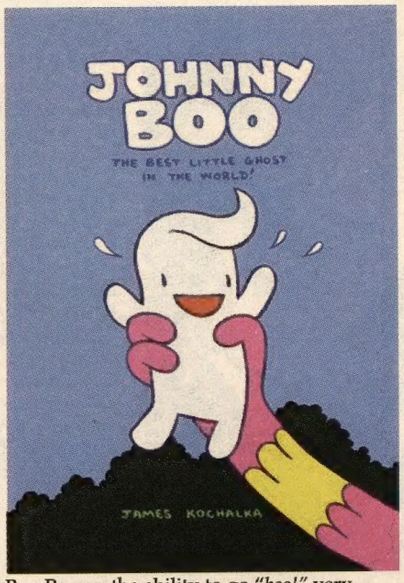
•*Brian K. Vaughan's* ***Y—The Last Man*** is also on the schedule for hardcover treatment; each hardcover volume will include the contents of two trade paperbacks, meaning the entire sixty-issue run will comprise five hardcovers.

•Scholastic Books' color repackaging of *Jeff Smith's* ***Bone*** should wrap up in early 2009 with the release of ***Crown of Horns,*** the final ***Bone*** volume; Smith has indicated that he'd like to follow that up with a boxed set of the color editions.

•*Jeff Smith's* Cartoon Books is preparing a reprinting of ***Stupid Stupid Rat Tales*** and ***Rose,*** peripheral parts of the ***Bone*** saga. Smith has indicated that at some point, ***Stupid Stupid Rat Tales*** will appear in a color version from Scholastic, complete with a new framing sequence.

•Smith has also indicated that he'd like to continue to tell new stories set in the valley where the ***Bone*** saga took place—and it's possible that supporting characters from that series might make an appearance. These would be chapter books, not comics; the stories would be written by *Tom Sniegoski* with illustrations by Smith.

•*James Kochalka* unveils his latest graphic novel with the release of ***Johnny Boo: The Best Little Ghost in the World,*** a 40-page all-ages hardcover starring a little ghost with



Boo Power: the ability to go *"boo!"* very loudly. His pet ghost named Squiggle has Squiggle Power, which means that he can fly and do really fast loop-the-loops. Together they have the world's greatest ghost adventures—and you can get into the spirit in June, thanks to the folks at Top Shelf Publishing!

•With ***Akira*** generating renewed interest due to the announcement of an upcoming live-action film, Dark Horse is going back to press with the currently-unavailable volumes of *Katsuhiro Otomo's* SF saga. Look for them back in stores later this spring.

• *Joe Hill's* ***Locke & Key*** continues to generate sellout after sellout at IDW: not only has the recently-released second issue sold out of its first printing, but the third issue sold out weeks before arriving in stores (for those wondering just how that works, it's simple: advance reorders exceeded the book's overprinting). Both books are going back to press, and the second editions of both should be in stores in late April.

•*Terry Moore's* ***Echo*** is returning to comic shops in a second edition in late April. It'll be easy to tell the difference: the second printing won't have the silver foil enhancement... but it will have the the same outstanding story and art!

•***Uncanny X-Men #497*** is getting a 1-for-50 incentive cover by *Marko Djurdjevic,* while ***Ultimates 3 #4*** earns a 1-for-20 incentive variant by *David Finch.* Look for both in late April.

•Collectors of Eaglemoss's superlative line of ***Classic Marvel Figurine Collector Magazines*** take note: the company is launching a line of ***Classic DC Figurine Collector Magazines,*** which combine histories of DC's iconic characters with hand-painted lead figures. Look for 'em to make their American debut later this year, beginning with ***Batman*** and ***Superman.***

•*Robin Moore,* author of the novel ***The Green Berets*** and co-writer (with *Barry Sadler)* of the song "Ballad of the Green Berets," died in late February. Comic fans might know him as the writer of the comic strip ***Tales of the Green Berets,*** which featured art by comics legend *Joe Kubert.*

•*Fletcher Hanks Jr.,* son of the comics creator whose crude but energetic work was lionized in *Paul Karasik's* ***I Shall Destroy All Civilized Planets,*** died in mid-March. Readers of that acclaimed work will recognize *Fletcher Hanks Jr.* from the backup story in which Karasik visits the son in an effort to learn more about the enigmatic *Fletcher Hanks Sr.*

•*Dean Motter* is deep into production of a new ***Mister X*** series slated to appear later this year from Dark Horse; the publisher will also release a collection of the original ***Mister X*** in hardcover (improving the production values and correcting the page errors that marred the earlier iBook trade paperback volumes).

•Marvel is adding a 1-for-50 *Alex Ross* sketch variant cover edition of ***Avengers/Invaders #1.***

•*Warren Ellis* revisits the world of his barbarian hero in ***Wolfskin Annual #1,*** a 64-page full-color comic scripted by *Mike Wolfer* and illustrated by *Gianiuca Pagliarani.*

•Acclaimed photo-realist artist *Tim Bradstreet* is the latest artist to be spotlighted by Desperado Publishing. ***Archetype: The Art of Tim Bradstreet*** is a 256-page oversized book spotlighting the career of the artist best known to many for his ***Punisher*** covers. This book will include never-before-seen material from his files and sketchbooks, as well as his enormously popular comic work, art from his career in movie design and posters, his gaming illustrations, and beautifully reproduced images of his personal favorites, with insights into his life and creative process. The book will be offered in a regular hardcover and a signed and numbered edition; look for it in July.

•*Mike Carey* has been tapped to develop his Virgin/SciFi comics series ***The Stranded*** into a television series for the SciFi Channel. "One of the purposes of our SciFi partnership is to create television and film writing opportunities for the best talents in the comic industry," Virgin CEO *Sharad Devarajan* said. "Having Mike write the television pilot for ***The Stranded,*** a comic book he created, is exactly what we had hoped for."

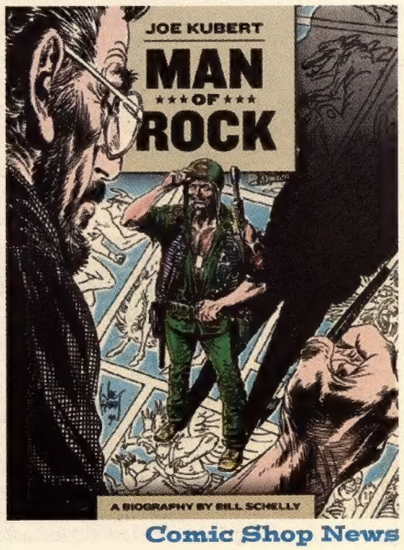
"From day one," Carey said, "working on ***The Stranded*** has felt like being at a nexus point of creativity. Virgin and SciFi created the perfect platform, and then supported the book and the creative team through all the stages of development. This feels like something we all own, and we all love. I can't wait to take it forward into its next incarnation."

•Voting is open for comics professionals to cast their votes four this year's ***Hall of Fame*** category of the ***Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards.*** The voting is conducted online, and pros can register at **www.eisnervote.com** for four creators from the following list of nominees: *Matt Baker, John Broome, Reed Crandall, Rudolph Dirks, Arnold Drake, George Evans, Creig Flessel, Graham Ingels, Mort Meskin, Tarpe Mills, Gilbert Shelton, George Tuska, Mort Weisinger, Len Wein,* and *Barry Windsor-Smith.* Votes must be cast by April 18th. The judges have already selected to creators to be inducted into the Hall of Fame: ***Yellow Kid*** creator *R.F. Outcalt* and DC founder *Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson.*

•***Boneyard*** creator *Richard Moore,* who recently put the long-running and acclaimed series on hiatus, unveils his new project this summer. ***Fire & Brimstone,*** published by Antarctic Press, is a full-color series chronicling the struggles of a fallen angel and a (slightly) risen demoness. They're half good, half evil... and all trouble! Both guilty of deity-displeasing screw-ups, they now must atone. So they've been paired up to bring in some of the Underworld's most problematic criminals... and to improve their own status at the same time.

•Checker Books brings *Mort Walker's* ***Beetle Bailey*** back into print with the release of ***Beetle Bailey by Mort Walker Volume 1 HC,*** a 200-page volume reprinting almost two years (September 1950 through June 1952) of the beloved strip. Look for it in June.

•*Bill Schelly* takes a look at the stunning career of comics legend *Joe Kubert* in Fantagraphics Books' ***Man of Rock: The Biography of Joe Kubert,*** slated for June release. The book spotlights the amazing sixty-plus year career of one of the field's most prolific creators—and if



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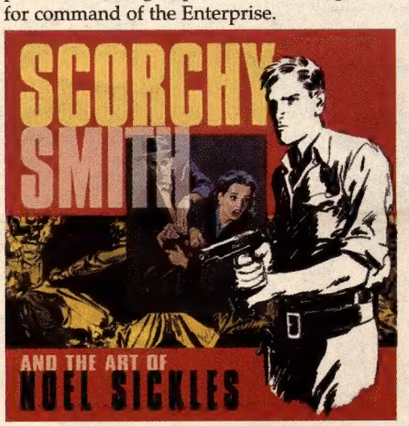
you've ever read Schelly's fascinating biography of *Otto Binder*, you know that this is one writer who can make a biography a fascinating must-read!

•Before artist *Mike Wieringo* passed away, he had completed seven pages of a ***What If?*** story featuring the "replacement" Fantastic Four: Spider-Man, the Hulk, Ghost Rider and Wolverine! Marvel Comics generously donated the script and Mike's art to The Hero Initiative, a charitable cause dedicated to assisting Golden and Silver Age comics creators who retired with no pensions or benefits. Wieringo's talented friends and fans stepped up to finish the story—and the result is a 48-page book featuring the full story, along with written tributes to Mike. Contributors include *Arthur Adams, Paul Renaud, Stuart Immonen, Cully Hamner, Alan Davis, Brian Stelfreeze, David Williams, Sanford Greene, Humberto Ramos, Skottie Young, Mike Allred, & Barry Kitson.* ***What If?—The Fantastic Four Tribute to Mike Wieringo*** is scheduled for June release.

•*Scott & David Tipton* and *David Messina* explore the other side of the Trek looking-glass in ***Star Trek: Mirror Images,*** which offers an intriguing Mirror Universe tale spinning out of the fan-favorite original series episode. This tale, scheduled for June release, explains how the evil Kirk rose to power, unseating Captain Pike in his quest for command of the Enterprise.



•In June, IDW spotlights the work of one of the field's pioneers in ***Scorchy Smith & the Art of Noel Sickles,*** a 352 page book edited by *Dean Mullaney* with biographical text by *Bruce Canwell.* This oversized hardcover combines a look at the groundbreaking career of this comic strip creator with a comprehensive reprinting of the entire ***Scorchy Smith*** run.

•Disney and SLG Publishing answer one of the more perplexing questions of the ***Alice in Wonderland*** mythos: just who was the "Maryann" for whom the White Rabbit mistakes Alice at the beginning of the story? The answer is revealed by *Tommy Kovac & Sonny Liew* in ***Wonderland,*** a hardcover graphic novel from Disney Press that collects the six issues miniseries.

•The distinctive talents of *Lynda Barry* are spotlighted in ***What It Is,*** a 208-page hardcover from Drawn & Quarterly that is filled with full-color drawings, comics, and collages by the popular independent creator that explore the essential nature of creativity. Look for it in June.

•Oni Press collects all of *Judd Winick's* tales of a twisted ten-year-old genius into a single volume with the June release of ***The Big Book of Barry Ween, Boy Genius,*** a 352-page 6" x 9" trade paperback that collects all twelve issues of the cult-favorite series.

•The ***Prince Valiant*** art of *Gary Gianni* is spotlighted in ***The Prince Valiant Page,*** a hardcover that offers a look at Gianni's version of *Hal Foster's* comic strip hero, along with insight into Gianni's working process. The summer-release book will be offered in a standard hardcover as well as a slipcased limited edition that includes a bound-in plate reproducing a bonus drawing.

And if that's not enough Gianni ***Prince Valiant*** for you, there's even more good news: Andrews & McMeel plans to release the first volume of a ***Prince Valiant*** trade paperback line reprinting the *Mark Schultz-Gary Gianni* run this fall; more volumes should follow in 2009.

The Flagg Is Unfurled in July

What better time than the month of Independence to break out the Flagg?

That's just what Dynamic Forces and Image are about to do, as the long-delayed hardcover collection of the first fourteen issues of *Howard Chaykin's* ***American Flagg!*** will finally see print this summer, more than four years after the book's originally scheduled release date.

"This book has taken more time to prepare than we ever envisioned," Dynamic Forces' *Nick Barrucci* told ***CSN,*** "but you can be sure that the finished product is worth the wait. We've spared no effort to make sure that this book lives up to the quality of the material that it includes."

In addition to the first fourteen issues of the 1980's series originally published by First comics, the collection will also include an unseen twelve-page story written and drawn by Chaykin, a foreword by *Michael Chabon,* and an afterword by *Jim Lee.*

So why the multi-year delay? In a conversation with ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady,* Chaykin said that it was largely due to "the assumption that the material was more ready than it was. The situation really boiled down to the fact that the reproduction of stuff at that time is very different than it is today. The assumption was that it would be a mistake to publish, cold, that is, without doing a lot of clean-up work on it, to create a more beautiful facsimile, if you will...

"The original art is long gone. That should be understood explicitly—the boards, the pages, they just ain't there no more. And we're talking 25 years ago here. So what we're shooting from is, in many cases, is a matter of digitizing the previously done artwork and recreating the colors using contemporary, modern techniques. That was where the technical problems came in.

"The comics in those days were a pretty 'seat-of-your-pants' world. If you look at reproduction today, the differences are pretty staggering. Remember - ***Flagg*** was shot from plastic plates in an offset process.

"So, on the one hand with the collection, there was the assumption was that you could just publish—and you couldn't, because the audience has an entirely different set of expectations. By the same token, you don't want to take the material and transform it into something that looks like a contemporary project, which loses its historicity. So in the end, you're trying to find a way to do a beautiful facsimile that still maintains the integrity of the original material, but still has a polish and sheen that supports it in a contemporary way....

"But then you get into the subjectivity factor of so many people deciding what, exactly, that means. And that's where problems start. It all sounds so much simpler than it is, but you have a lot of different perspectives on exactly how you want to approach it, and the definition of those very ideas I mentioned.

"Everybody had a different idea of what the definition of a contemporary looking facsimile that speaks for the previous material."

While Chaykin was involved initially, he ultimately decided that "I would be better served by standing outside of the process, because I was not going to make any friends by supporting any one point of view. My idea was to let the process evolve itself. Had I had any idea at the time that the process would take so long that I would be ready for Medicare by the time it ended, I might have stepped in sooner, but after a certain point, there seemed to be no reason for me to be involved, and it just had to run its own course."

As Chaykin explained, the unseen material in this collection isn't exactly new. "It's new old material – previously unseen old stuff! The story is a little vignette piece that touches all the bases of the strip. I'm looking forward to seeing it in action. For what it's worth, it's what my career is measured against."

American Flagg! Volume One HC is slated for July release; two trade paperback volumes reprinting the same material will follow in the fall

Corben Perfects His Lovecraft

Comics writer and artist *Richard Corben* is no stranger to the work of *Howard Phillips Lovecraft*—in fact, some of his earliest underground work included an adaptation of the classic Lovecraft tale "Rats in the Walls," along with art in such ultra-collectible Lovecraftean publication as *Meade Frierson's* ***HPL.***

Later this year, Corben returns to the fantastic and horrifying worlds of HPL's imagination in ***Haunt of Horror: Lovecraft,*** a miniseries that will, according to Corben, include "three adaptations in each issue, followed by the original text version.

"The stories include 'Dagon,' 'The Music Of Eric Zann,' and 'Arthur Jermyn,'" Corben told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady.* "These were picked both for length and for variety of subject. The other adaptations are from Lovecraft's poetry—actually, all from 'Fungi From Yuggoth.'"

While Corben's Poe adaptations sometimes strayed quite far from the source material, Corben said that the stories in ***Lovecraft*** "were adapted pretty close to the originals with a couple of liberties. The poetry is not too specific, so we took a freer stance with it. Lovecraft's stories are inspiring and I wanted the comic to remain true to his intent. That is to the best of my abilities. In some cases, I had to invent a scene that would illustrate in action and dialogue, material that Lovecraft covers in background exposition."

Is Corben collaborating with anyone on these stories, or is he both writing and illustrating the adaptations? "Going into the project I thought I would merely be doing the comic art, but as it turned out, I did the adaptations too."

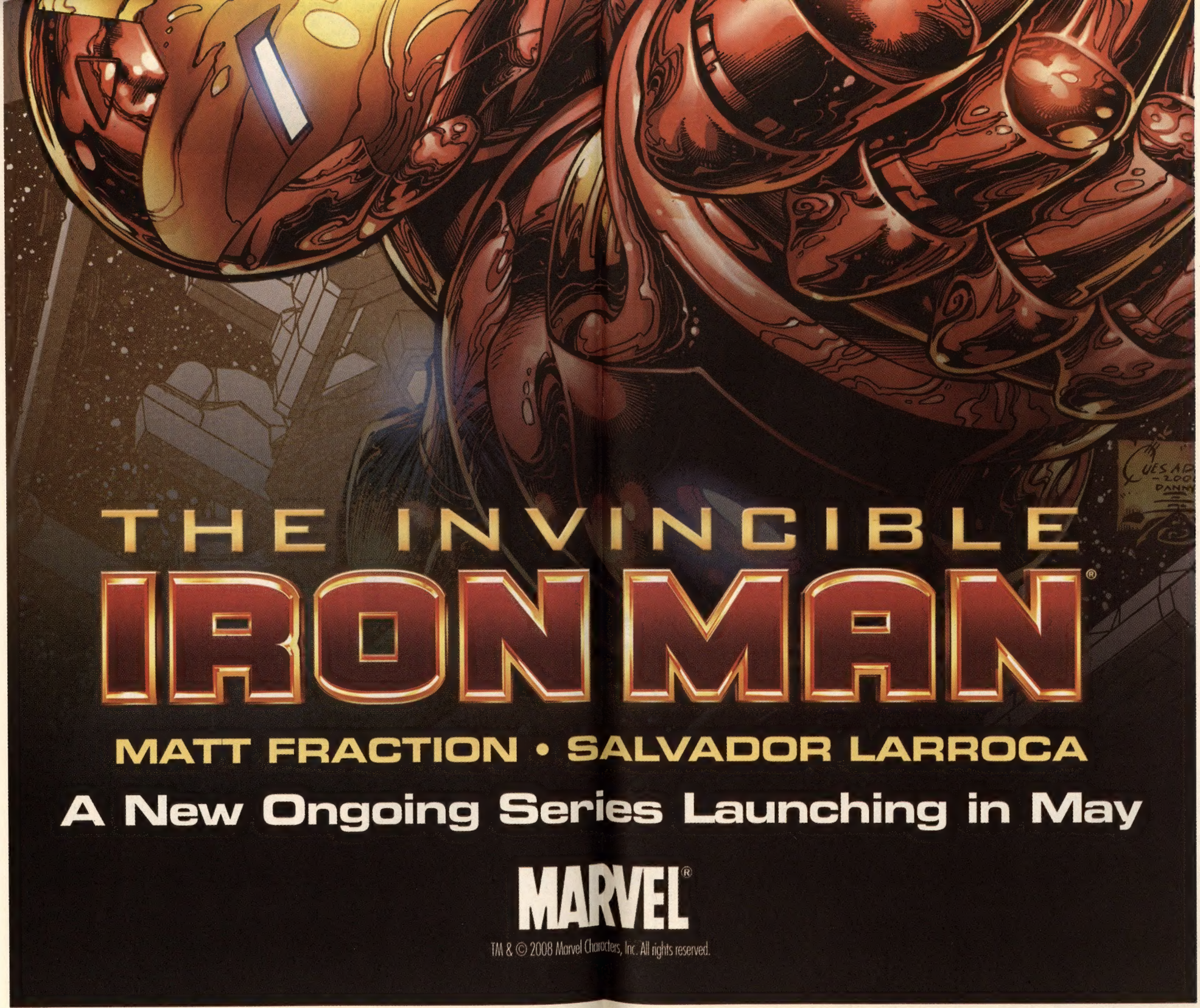
What is it that makes so Lovecraft's work so appealing to so many comic book writers and artists? "I would say it is Lovecraft's amazing imagination, the vivid scenes that he suggests (but doesn't always describe in detail), and—although Lovecraft denied that his characters were structured with complete personalities—his own persona coming through his characters," Corben said.

"I think fans of Lovecraft will welcome many adaptations of their favorite stories, good or bad, faithful or loose. I hope ours will be rated highly. For newcomers, the inclusion of the original text versions will doubtlessly inspire them to check out his great body of work."

Haunt of Horror: Lovecraft #1 is slated for early June release.

Continued on page 6

IRON MAN'S GREATEST ENEMY EMERGES



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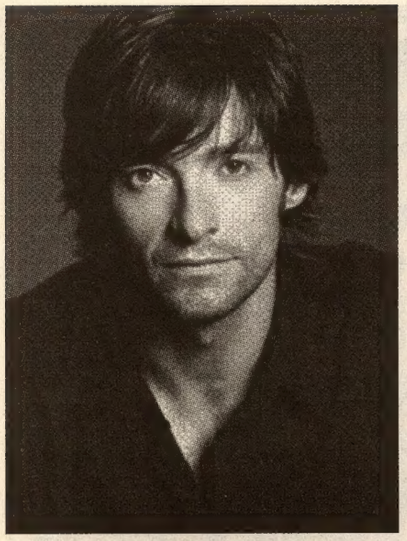


Jackman's a Real Nowhere Man

Comic fans know actor *Hugh Jackman* for his portrayal of Wolverine—but they'll soon get to know him as comic book creator as well! Jackman is working with writer *Marc Guggenheim* and Virgin Comics to launch the original comic series ***Nowhere Man*** this summer.

Virgin isn't revealing much about the plot of the series, other than to say that it's an SF series set in a future in which mankind has traded privacy for safety. "I've had so much fun in the graphic novel world with the ***X-Men*** franchise that I wanted to get even more involved," Jackman said Jackman. "I am so excited to work with Virgin and Marc to create a compelling character and story that hopefully will also make it to the big screen."

Nowhere Man's writer, *Marc Guggenheim*, has not only written ***Wolverine, Amazing Spider-Man,*** and ***Flash,*** but is also the writer and creator of the ABC series ***Eli Stone.***

Virgin will team with Seed Productions, Jackman's production company with producer *John Palermo*, to create the comic series and then take it into film and other areas.

"Virgin Comics is focused on pairing the best comic book talents with icons in the entertainment industry to develop original stories," said Sharad Devarajan, Virgin Comics CEO. "*Hugh Jackman* and *Marc Guggenheim* working together on ***Nowhere Man*** is a perfect combination that promises a great story for everyone."

Sharing Shannara's Graphic Details

More than thirty years ago, *Terry Brooks* made his mark on the fantasy field with the release of the Tolkien-inspired ***Sword of Shannara.*** The book inspired a veritable fantasy franchise, with Brooks producing one best-selling novel after another.

But now, fans who want to follow the saga of Shannara will have to check out a graphic novel.

Dark Wraith of Shannara, written by Brooks with *Robert Place Napton* and illustrated by *Edwin David*, is set a few years after the events of ***The Wishsong of Shannara.*** Brooks explained to ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** Benjamin Ong Pang Kean how the graphic novel came about.

Originally Brooks was "reluctant to do anything with ***Shannara*** other than in book format. But Del Rey formed a manga division some five years or so back, and they had hinted at the possibility of doing something with ***Shannara***, so I had some time to consider the idea," the author said." Because the growth in this area has been so huge in the past decade, I thought maybe it was something consider. After Del Rey told me how they wanted to handle it and how they intended to give me control over the material, I decided it was worth a try.

"I took the events of ***The Wishsong of Shannara***, the fourth book chronologically in the series, for the jumping-off point for the story in ***Dark Wraith***. But I don't have the talent or interest in the adaptive process. Both Edwin and Robert knew the ***Shannara*** series intricately coming in, and their skills were an immediate draw for me in agreeing to turn the project over to them. I kept my finger on what they were doing, but really it wasn't necessary. I did very little editing of their work."

Was it difficult to give up control of his characters to other creators? "Once upon a time, it would have been difficult," Brooks said. "But when you agree to projects outside the books, you have to trust the people to your bring in to do the work. I think all of us at Del Rey felt that Robert and Edwin could do the job. Turns out, we were right!"

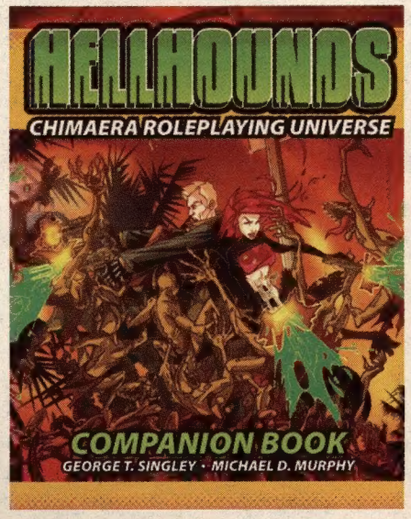
Brooks is very pleased with David's visual interpretation of his fantasy realm. "I think the artistic renderings of the Mwellrets and the Croton Witch will catch the reader's eye. I like what Edwin did with the Moor Cat, Whisper, too—different than I had envisioned, but very good..."

Brooks confirmed that he has no shortage of ***Shannara*** tales to be told. "It's true that I've got a bunch of stories in ***Shannara*** I haven't yet written. You pick and choose which direction you want to go and which stories you want to tell. As for the graphic novels—if ***Dark Wraith*** does well, I will consider doing more, working in the same way with a writer and artist."

While ***Dark Wraith of Shannara*** is Brooks' first foray into comic book creation, he's far from a newcomer to the medium. "I grew up reading all those comics back in the fifties and sixties," Brooks said. "I began collecting some of them after a time. Did that for maybe fifteen years or so. I've got complete collections of many of the Marvel comics, including ***Spider-Man, Daredevil*** and some others. I wrote an English Lit paper in my senior year of college on the philosophy of Marvel Comics. Got an A.

"As for writing a comic, I don't think I would do so if it wasn't my own story. I just don't have enough interest or time to spend on that kind of thing. But you never know, do you?"

Dark Wraith of Shannara is available through your local comic shop.



A New Player in the Comics Game

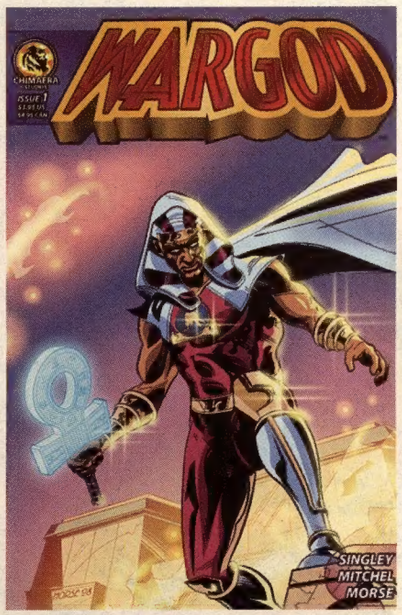
For years, comics and games have been linked (which is one of the reasons that so many comic shops also stock a selection of RPGs, CMGs, and CCGs)—but Chimaera Studios takes that link one step further this summer when they launch their Chimaera Comics line, featuring such titles as ***Consortium Of Justice, Wargod, Lonebow, Blaze Anderson: Cosmonaut!, Titus, The Byzantine,*** and a new run of Chimaera publisher *George T Singley's* ***Hellhounds***, previously published by Image Comics.

Singley told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Benjamin Ong Pang Kean* how he moved into publishing. "I was publishing my creator owned series ***Hellhounds*** at Image Comics and also working on other projects with creators on the side to publish with other publishers, and I thought, 'well, we are all working together for the same goals and I've surrounded myself with talented and reliable professionals—why not just start a studio?' That was that. I asked specific people to join and they all said yes... and now here we are."

How did this lead to the launching of Chimaera Comics? "Well, if you want something done right—ya know? We've actually been moving towards this for a little while now and the timing is right. We have specific publishing plans as well as ancillary plans and sometimes it's just better to get it done your way... the way you want it."

Singley's initial publishing plan calls for "two to three books a month solicited for the majority of the year, with the maximum amount never exceeding five books a month—and that may happen only a few months out of the year/next year. We are launching with our event series ***Consortium of Justice #1*** in July/August of this year; that series will introduce new and old readers alike to the Chimaera Hero Universe, and the events that will shape the Universe moving forward. This is the perfect issue to get in on the ground floor of a new universe and enjoy the ride!

"***Wargod #1*** also launches in July/August with the ***Absolution*** storyline; the first three issues are already completed and it looks amazing. Then, throughout this year (and next), we will be publishing series like ***Hellhounds, Lonebow, Blaze Anderson: Cosmonaut!, The Bouncer,*** and ***Titus***, to name a few. Also creator-owned books by *Brian Augustyn* and other industry pros (to be announced later) will be peppered throughout the schedules."

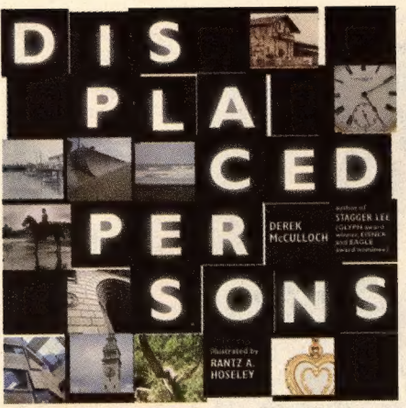


Not only is the company launching its own comics line, but it's working with Mongoose Publishing to release the official ***Chimaera Universe Role-Playing Game.*** The RPG, featuring the same characters and concepts as the comics line, will kick off with the release of a 240-page core handbook; the first supplemental module is the ***Hellhounds Companion,*** a 90-page book that focuses on the Hellhounds' corner of the Chimaeraverse. More companions are slated for release later in 2008 and in 2009.

Coming Comics—Image in June

Claudio Sanchez & Tony Moore continue "Coheed & Cambria Comix" with ***Amory Wars II #1,*** subtitled "The Second Stage Turbine Blade Part VI." Trapped in space, Coheed and Cambria use their newfound abilities to face off against the awesome power of Admiral Vielar Crom; the Prise make a terrible sacrifice; and Supreme Tri-Mage Wilhelm Ryan reveals the secret behind his plans to power the ultimate weapon.

Meet Chuck Amok, a down-and-out stage magician ,who is transported, along with his trusty rabbit Caesar, to a reality where magic actually works in ***Charlatan Ball,*** a new series by *Joe Casey & Andy Suriano.*



A detective in *Dashiell Hammett's* San Francisco of 1939 investigates the disappearance of an heiress while struggling to hold his family together. In 1969, twin brothers find themselves on opposite sides of the law as the Summer of Love gives way to the death of the Sixties. In 1999, a marriage explodes in violence under the strain of unsatisfied greed as the dot-com bubble reaches the bursting point. What's the connection? Find out when you read ***Displaced Persons,*** an original graphic novel by *Derek McCulloch & Rantz A. Hosely.*

Those superpowered college frosh are back in ***Freshmen: Summer Vacation Special*** by *Seth Green, Hugh Sterbakov & Sheldon Mitchell.* The kids' summer vacation takes a bizarre twist when someone from their past rises from the dead to wreak havoc on Freese College—and it's all told through the sky-high eyes of the Intoxicator!

Mark Andrew Smith & Marcelo Dichiara take a look at a disturbing plan to create a new generation of super-heroes in ***Kill All Parents #1.*** An authoritarian government unleashes a secret program to 'save' mankind by eliminating villains: by insuring that every child born with a super power becomes a super hero. Based on the life's work of a brilliant but demented scientist and futurist, the method is effective but fantastically cruel, unnatural, and ultimately deeply flawed...

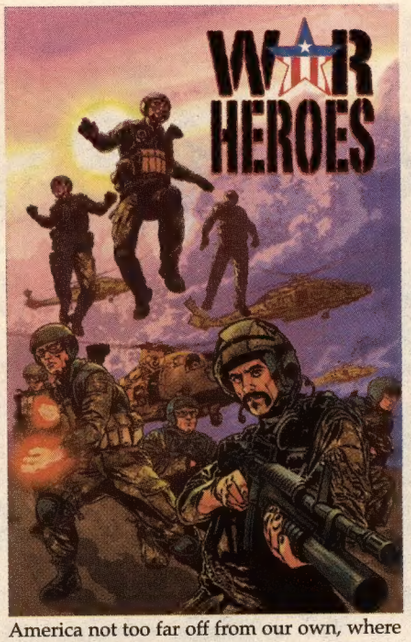
Top Cow's ***Pilot Season*** continues in June with the release of ***Genius #1*** by *Marc Bernardin, Adam Freeman, & Afua Richardson,* the story of a teenage girl who organizes the gangs of South Central into a killer army at war with the LAPD; and ***Alibi #1*** by *Joshua Hale Fialkov & Jeremy Haun,* the story of an assassin who always has the perfect alibi—he's somewhere else when the crime occurs!

Jonathan Hickman & Ryan Bodenheim offer ***A Red Mass for Mars*** in a new four-part limited series. In a world that has survived every catastrophe imaginable, a new threat from beyond stars looks to be the end of all humanity. ***A Red Mass for Mars*** is a story about the death of utopia, the last days of Earth and the one man who could save everyone... but won't.

Mike San Giacomo joins with 21 artists to present 32 stories taking place over 50 years at a drive-in theater in ***Tales from the Starlight Drive-In,*** an original graphic novel. The stories combine to create a single novel with a powerful, unexpected finale.

Meet the kind of girl most parents adore in ***Vix,*** a three-part series by *Rantz A. Hosely & Matthew Humphries.* Smart and pretty, with a seemingly inexhaustible positive attitude. Why is it then, that she is haunted by vivid flashbacks of horrible things that never occurred?

Mark Millar joins with artist *Tony Harris* to launch ***War Heroes,*** a new superhero series. What's it about? The series is set in an



America not too far off from our own, where terrorism has scorched the Earth. A once great nation has shattered into a third world version of its previous self. When traditional tactics prove obsolete in this new country, America's military forces turn to the last weapon with any hope of success: superhumanity. ""***War Heroes*** is everything I've been leading up to with ***Civil War, Ultimates, The Authority, Kick-Ass,*** and ***Wanted,***" Millar told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady.* "In a way, it's the culmination of superhero concepts I've thus far only dreamed about, brought to fruition due to Tony's beautiful line work and the unique creative freedom Image Comics provides. Consider this our ***Ultimates 3. War Heroes*** is a grand step away from superheroes as you previously perceived them. Tony and I are doing this without any restriction, completely uncensored, taking superheroes to their next evolutionary step." And you can see the results in just two more months!

Image collected editions include:

•***After the Cape II TP,*** collecting the three-issue miniseries along with oodles of extras;

•***America Jr. Volume 2 TP,*** collecting 150 strips from the award-winning web-comic by *Nick Capetanakis, Todd Livingston, and Brendon & Brian Fraim;*

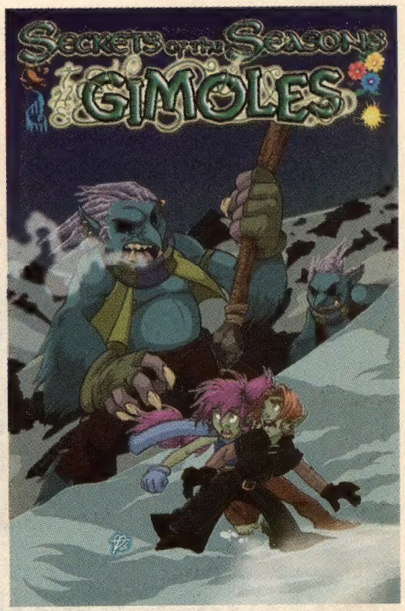
•***Dogwitch Volume 3: Mood Swings TP,*** collecting *Dan Schaeffer's* ***Dogwitch #s 13-18;***

•***Drain Volume 1 TP,*** collecting ***Drain #s 1-6;***

•***Dust Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the WWII sf adventure series by *Paolo Parente & Davide Fabbri;*

•***Dynamo 5 Volume 2: Moments of Truth TP,*** collecting *Jay Faerber's* ***Dynamo 5 #s 8-12;***

•***Freshmen Volume 1 HC,*** collecting the original misadventures as told by *Seth Green, Hugh Sterbakov, & Leonard Kirk;*



•***Gimoles TP,*** collecting the all-ages miniseries by *Mike Bullock, Theo Bain, Michael Mayhew, & Bob Pedroza;*

•***Horror Book TP,*** a four-in-one volume collecting ***'68; Creature from the Depths, Frankenstein,*** and ***Full Moon;***

•***Killing Girl Volume 1: A Sister's Love TP,*** collecting ***Killing Girl #s 1-5;***

•***Loaded Bible TP,*** collecting all three of the 44-page "Jesus versus vampires" oneshots;

•***Pilot Season 2007 TP,*** collecting all five ***Pilot Season*** books—***Angelus, Cyblade, Necromancer, Ripclaw,*** and ***Velocity;***

•***Scud the Disposable Assassin: The Whole Shebang TP,*** collecting ***Scud #s 1-24*** plus the oneshot ***Drywall: Unzipped*** in one massive 764-page volume;

•***Spawn Volume 6 TP,*** collecting ***Spawn #s 96-114;***

•***Strange Embrace TP,*** collecting the eight-part series by *David Hine;* and

•***The Sword Volume 1: FIre TP,*** collecting ***The Sword #s 1-6*** by *Joshua & Jonathan Luna.*

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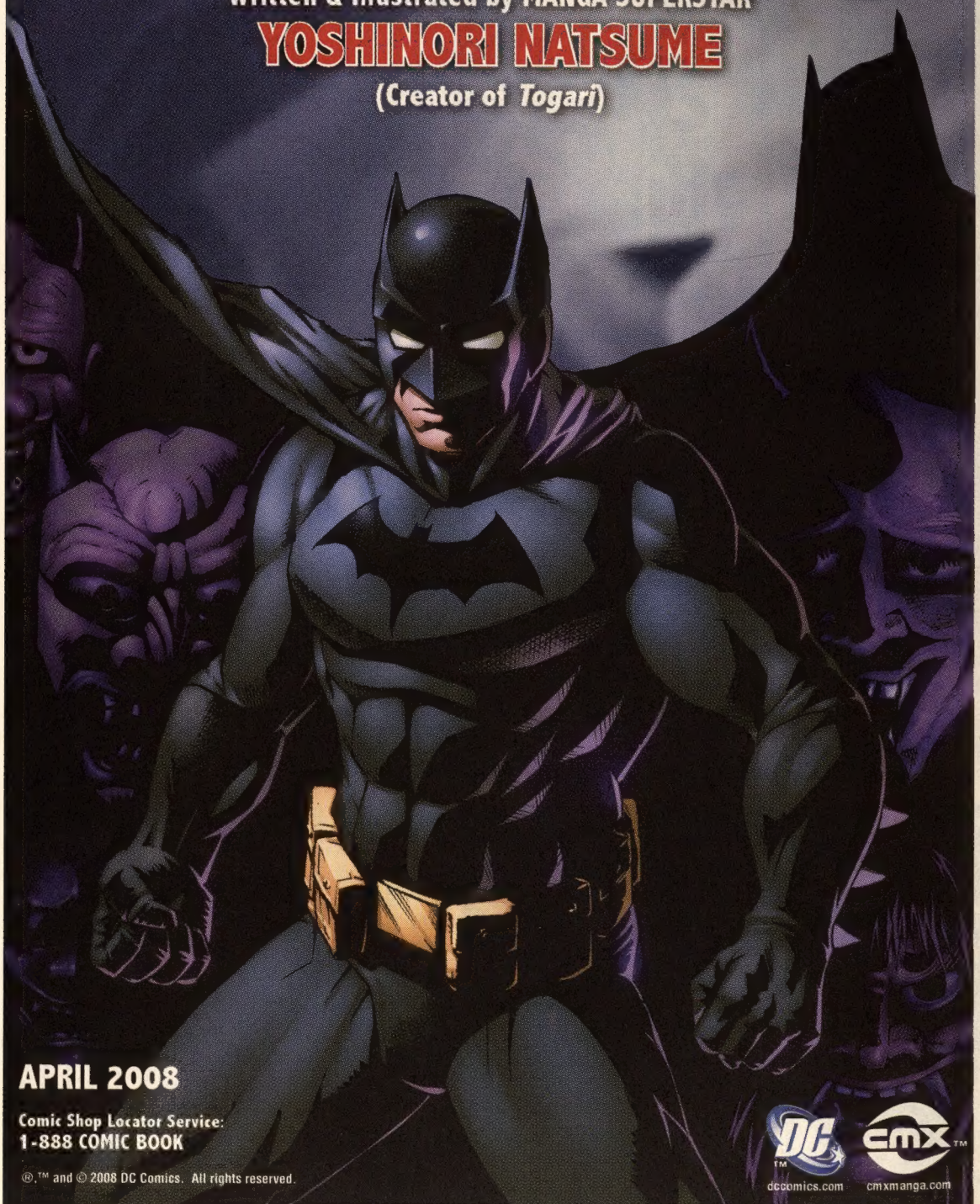

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